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A Data News Weekly Exclusive

# Inauguration 2014 and the Future of New Orleans



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# Inauguration 2014

## and the Future of New Orleans



New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu addresses crowd during the inauguration held on May 5, 2014. Landrieu was re-elected to his second term as Mayor. photo courtesy of The Advocate

### By Edwin Buggage

On May 5, 2014 our local elected officials were sworn into office. Many were re-elected, such as Mayor Mitch Landrieu, Criminal Sheriff Marlin Gusman, and City Councilperson-at-Large Stacey Head. But several new faces were sworn in as well including City

Councilman-at-Large Jason Williams, City Councilperson in District C Nadine Ramsey, City Council District D Jared Brossett and a new Coroner Dr. Jeffrey Rouse.

With this mix of old and new it is presently unknown what the future holds in the political arena for New Orleans. But I feel we can all breathe a collective sigh of relief that at least the game of political musical chairs

seems to have stopped for now. And that our present mayor cannot simply rely on a council that will be his rubber stamp. Also on a more positive note, we now have majority African-American city council although that does not mean it will be effective in changing the lives of some African-Americans, it is a good starting point than what was previously forecasted by some

**On the Cover:** Newly inaugurated City Council Members (l to r) Jared Brossett, District D, Nadine Ramsey, District C and Councilman-at-Large Jason Williams.

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Cover Story, Continued from previous page.

that we were at the end of African-American political representation in New Orleans.

Also we saw during the election that the people roundly rejected the re-emergence of some of the political fossils from 'the bad old days.' With their voice at the ballot box they made it known loud and clear that they will not stand for these former officeholders rising from the dead trying to resurrect their political careers. Moving forward we must continue to thwart the efforts of those who were once kings that have now been reduced to pawns in the chess game of politics and remember that it is not a bad thing, but a good thing for the people of a City who want good government. And we cannot as voters be naive fully realizing that some who were re-elected are flawed in some ways and have a hard job ahead, but selecting them was a much better option than the alternatives. But it is up to us the citizens to become more engaged to make them stay the course. Ultimately, we must continue to move forward and not look back to the politics of the past if New Orleans is to reposition itself as a 21st Century City. We must embrace that things are changing in our City and we have to get used to doing things differently. We cannot continue to be afraid of going in a different direction as long as it is positive.

Mayor Landrieu in his inaugural address spoke about an unnamed child and how it was important for leadership to do what is necessary so that that child is not left behind. While this is a laudable goal, it will take more than elected leadership for this to become a reality. For many of citizens cannot do as Mayor Landrieu and speak in an abstract way about these unnamed individuals, for them these people are real to them. Their lives lost because of the violence in their communities or an inadequate education that does not prepare them for anything above a subsistence existence. Or neighborhoods with unacceptable amounts of blight that are toxic wastelands causing health risk for those who live near them. We must realize it is going to take a different type of leadership that needs to be held to a higher standard if we are to become a better City.

And we must realize it will take more than just elected officials, it will be up to individuals as well as families and institutions changing the way they do things for us to be a better City. To be the kind

of place where all citizens deserve a chance to reach their full potential, and that cannot be done in a City where Third World levels of inequality exist. For us to become a model of success certain things must become unacceptable such as that only a stone throw from places where tourists come to enjoy themselves and the City throws world class events, pockets of poverty and hopelessness is the norm for far too many. We must accept and realize this is real and must be dealt with and not simply hidden or swept un-

der the rug during major events as if it doesn't exist. While others may not see this disparity for every day New Orleanians it is all too real. And moving forward we must find a way to level the playing field where those citizens and communities that are continually being ignored get the attention they deserve. This is what must happen if we are to truly become the 'One New Orleans' that Mayor Landrieu talks about frequently in his speeches.

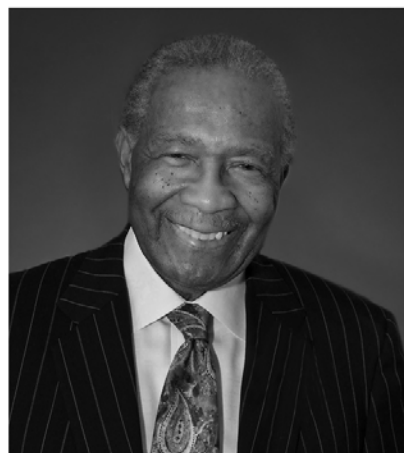
Despite all that is wrong with New Orleans, it is poised to become

a great City. But this will never become a reality in the foreseeable future without tapping into the pools of talented people who are undiscovered jewels lying in the pockets of the backstreets of this City's neighborhoods. And if these buried treasures continue to be ignored this City will not prosper. It will continue to be a sad tale of two cities, and that would be a shame. But fortunately this time around the people did their job at the polls, but it must be followed up with more civic engagement; letting their col-

lective voices not only being heard but followed up with action, meaning demanding a better job from those in elected positions. The days ahead for the City and what it is facing is a daunting task for all of us to say the least. And it is all our problem but we must realize that inside those same hands lie the solutions. While the future of New Orleans remains uncertain, it seems that it is brighter than it was yesterday and the molding of what can become its great history can be shaped by our collective hands.

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# Jason Williams...

*Councilman-at-Large and a Bridge Builder  
for the "New" New Orleans*



City Councilman-at-Large Jason Williams speaking with Data News Weekly Editor Edwin Buggage

By Edwin Buggage  
Photos by Clarence Williams

## A Different Brand of Leader Putting People First

Jason Williams is a newly elected City Council-at-Large, overcoming what at times seemed like insur-

mountable odds as the political establishment backed his opponent. He led a campaign that victory was truly a David and Goliath moment, posting not just a victory but running up the score into a route winning 68% of the vote. Williams, appealed to every demographic and his campaign showed that people

with different political leaning can come together behind the right candidate with the right message. On the heels of his swearing in, during his first day on the job Jason Williams, with his mother and Communications Director in-tow sat down with Data News Weekly.

On his victory and how he plans to govern he says, "The way we won is very empowering, in the sense that we did not have any of the political machines with us, we didn't have any of the established politicos and by winning this way, not having the mayor or other elected officials meant that we were relying on the people. Then by winning with 68 percent of the vote they made a definitive statement that they wanted something different. In me they have someone they can talk to that's not tied to political organizations. So for them and for me it is very empowering, so whatever decision needs to be made it is shaped by what the people want and need."

In the past many people have felt left out of the process of decision making process down at City Hall. This is something Williams plans to change. "Since being elected I have spoken to people and many

of the issues are the same as they have been crime, public safety, lack of jobs etc., but mainly it is people wanting to be heard and considered when decisions are being made. They want to be included in the process, something they feel that hasn't been done in recent years. They feel it has been a void in community participation and we plan to eradicate that. And that doesn't always mean everyone gets what they want, but people want to know they were part of the decision making process and that their voices were valued."

## On Winning, Effective Governing and Working with the Mayor

After a whirlwind election cycle, a stunning victory in the run-off and now being sworn in Williams harkens back to the feeling he had during the election and his swearing in. "The election night was exhausting, we campaigned all day, on election night it was an out of body experience. My adrenaline was flowing for a couple of weeks after that. But after being sworn in I was very aware of the job that needs to be done. Now my focus in getting to work and making sure that I can

make good on many of the things I promised to bring to the people during the campaign. When I think back on election night it was more celebratory and now I have been sworn in it was like permission to officially start working and I am excited about bringing a fresh approach to governing."

While the mayor may have had a more amicable relationship with the prior council, it is unknown how he will work with this council. Williams feels that having a bit of push-back from the council on certain issues makes for better governing as opposed to having them simply rubber stamp any initiative he introduces. "I liken the relationship like a family running a house. A husband and a wife or a partner may not always agree on an issue. But ultimately it is about how do you get from point a to point b. I think the lion share of the time we may agree, but when we disagree about what is a priority, we are going to have to have a real dialog to get to those answers. I feel just because it is a difference of opinions doesn't mean that it has to be friction. It is about going through that process to get to the answers. Because as we know a cash strapped City can't do



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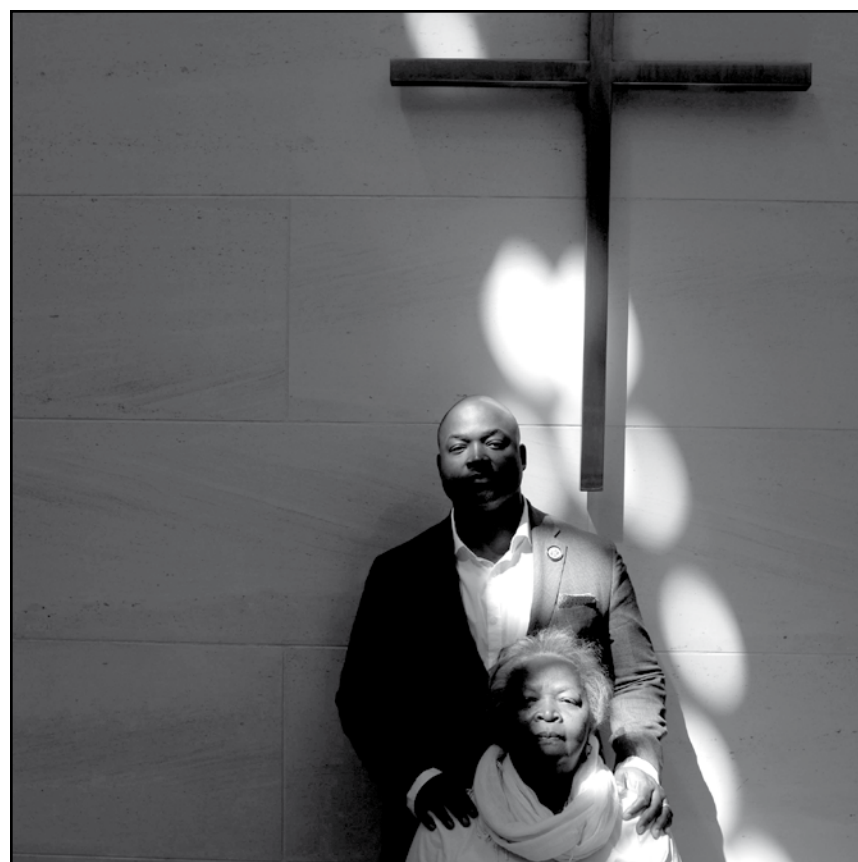
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Jason Williams speaking on his victory and how he plans to be inclusive in his style of governing, "The way we won is very empowering, in the sense that we did not have any of the political machines with us, we didn't have any of the established politicians and by winning this way, not having the mayor or other elected officials meant that we were relying on the people. Then by winning with 68 percent of the vote they made a definitive statement that they wanted something different."



Jason Williams and his mother Janice Rogers, he says she taught him a lot about compassion and serving others, qualities he feels are important in a leader and he says he wants to bring to these things to City Hall.

everything and I feel we have to get beyond this concept that disagreeing is a bad thing. I think it is a more refined way to get to a better result and that benefits everyone involved in my opinion."

#### Investing in Today for a Better Tomorrow

In his work as a criminal defense attorney he has a unique perspective seeing so many people fall through the cracks of society, "You get what you put in and right now we are not spending a lot of money on youth and family services and the crime rates are high and we have one of the highest incarceration rates in the world. The average age of these offenders is getting younger because we are not investing in our youth. So we are getting out exactly what we are putting into them."

Williams says he is working on initiatives that can help to eradicate some of these problems and give young people hope. "We've got things going on with all types of projects, what I would like to do is get together with educational leaders, with business leaders so we are putting systems in place with workforce training. And not simply auto mechanic, barbering, hairdressing and carpentry, but teaching kids and exposing them to highly skilled jobs that

they can get this type of training and in two years making anywhere between 65 and 85,000 dollars a year without a college degree, but specialized training. What I want to do with my position is expose them to opportunities and put the tools in place for them to be successful, because I feel if we can create for our people a way into the middle-class than it is a win-win for our community and improves the quality of all our lives."

#### One New Orleans and Building Bridges of Understanding

New Orleans is a City mired in racial politics, this is something that Williams acknowledges is a reality for some, but is above the fray, building coalitions across lines of race and class. His goal is to unite citizens under one umbrella making them realize that the things that unite them are greater than the things where they differ. "When I ran my campaign it was similar to how I ran my life, I've had friends from every demographic, gender, race, socioeconomic, so when I decided to run I was reaching out to the people I have been dealing with my whole life and they look like every color of the rainbow. But I wanted to be hyper-focused on not just doing that, but letting people know we were doing it.

Because there are some folks who are friends of mine who only have one type of friend, and I always like to bring them around to meet other types of folks. I feel when it comes to breaking stereotypes and misconceptions we are all one interaction away from something that may change their perspective. Like for example the Algiers Ferry is not a Black issue, a White issue or a Vietnamese issue it is a geographical, it is a socioeconomic issue. So we kept bringing this stuff up and many other things because we wanted to show people they had more in common than they do the things that separate them."

In a City where food is as an important a part of living, Williams offers his recipe for a better New Orleans, "I think a great way to build bridges between people is to begin treating the City the way we do with food; people will travel anywhere for good food if they think the food is good. Unlike other cities New Orleans is a place where you can get all types of fusion that is what makes us unique. When it comes to food and what's on the dinner table we do not have boundaries and we need to have the same things when it comes to how we live our lives and if we did that we could have a better City."

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# Shoot Ya Best Shot!

## Jazz Fest 2014 Wraps Up

### Photos by Kichea S. Burt

The 2014 New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival wrapped up its run with a full week of smooth sounds and funky beats that kept the crowds moving. We all love Jazz Fest, and are sad to see it go, but one thing is for certain, it will be back same time next year. Enjoy the highlights.



## Harold Battiste at the Prime Example

Photos by Glenn Summers

Friends gathered at the Prime Example to celebrate Harold Battiste. The evening featured music and a special guest, Karen Celestan, Tulane University's senior program manager of music rising who is authoring a book on Battiste.

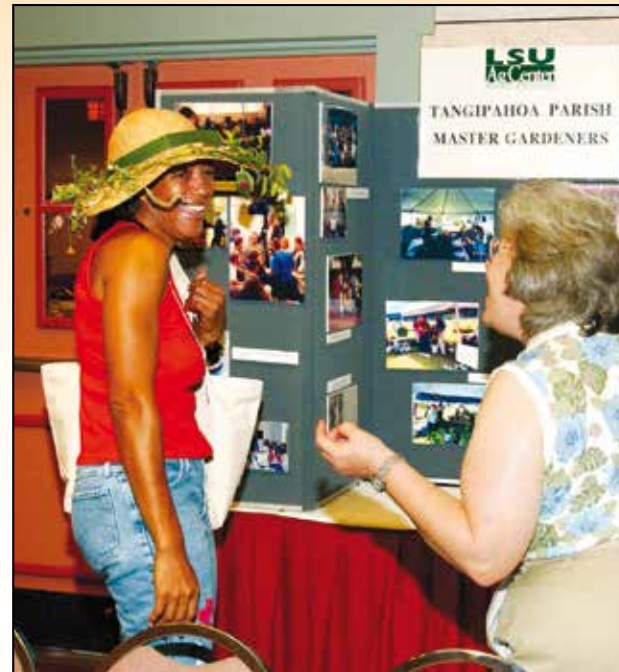




# Becoming a Master Gardener



LMG Amber Dawn with kids at Kids Farm at Hollygrove Market.



Master Gardener's Conference

## By LMG Calla Victoria

If you are an avid gardener and love playing in the dirt, you might be ready to take the next step in your gardening journey. Perhaps you are ready to become a Master Gardener like myself. Almost every state has a Master Gardening program through the state's extension service. In Louisiana the Louisiana Master Gardening Program is sponsored by the LSU Ag Center and directed by the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. The program is designed to recruit and train volunteers with horticultural expertise to aid home gardeners with their gardening needs. The Master Gardeners are a volunteer army, equipped with shovel and trowel, ready and willing to tackle the areas gardening needs. You

will find that Master Gardeners heading up many of the community and victory garden programs around the City like LMG (Louisiana Master Gardener) Lydia Pollard with the Arc Project uptown, LMG Melissa Luer with The Victory Garden Project at the World War II Museum, LMG Amber Dawn with the Kids Farm at the Hollygrove Market, and LMG Eileen Hollander with the Super Plant Display Garden and the Iris Walk at the Sydney and Walda Bestoff Sculpture Garden in City Park.

The Louisiana Master Gardener Program provides invaluable training and educational opportunities. The program is open to all people regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion or national origin. Master Gardener Programs are all-volunteer programs sanc-

tioned by land-grant institutions in each state and function as an extension of the college or university. So if you are interested in becoming a Master Gardener know that you will be obligated to 40 hours of volunteer service during your first year, and 20 hours a year of volunteer service with six hours of continuing education thereafter for your yearly recertification.

There are many perks associated with becoming a Master Gardener aside from the advanced training and knowledge of horticulture. There is also the satisfaction of helping others, working with a great groups of people, visiting some amazing gardens as Master Gardeners are called on to lead Secret Garden tours and invited to garden field trips; and lots of free cuttings, seeds, and plants!

The upcoming Louisiana Master Gardener Training Class is set for July 31, 2014 through September 25, 2014 on Tuesday & Thursday mornings from 9 a.m. until noon in the New Orleans Botanical Garden (NOBG) Garden Study Center. Additionally, there will be two field trips to the Burden and Hammond Research Stations.

Applications must be received by June 1, 2014. If you need an application, please go to the "Gardening Questions" page of my website, fill out the question form and I will email you a copy of the application.

<http://www.thegardeningdiva.com/gardening-questions.html>

**Remember, never get too busy to stop and smell the beautiful flowers!**

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## To Be Equal

# Sotomayor

## A Voice of Reason among Reckless Rhetoric



**Marc Morial**  
President and CEO  
National Urban League

to dismantle the Voting Rights Act of 1965, on April 22, the Court ruled that Michigan voters had the right to ban race, i.e. affirmative action, as a factor in college admissions. The court's decision undermines a landmark 2003 ruling that affirmed the use of race-sensitive admissions policies at the University of Michigan Law School because of a compelling interest in fostering diversity in higher education.

In 2006, opponents of that ruling successfully campaigned and passed Proposal 2, a state constitutional amendment that gave voters the right to supersede elected university trustees and the right to ban the consideration of race as one of many factors in admissions. It is important to note that only race was singled out for the ban. Other factors, such as alumni status, athletics and geography remain in place. A federal appeals court subsequently ruled Prop 2 unconstitutional as it violated the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The case made its way to the Supreme Court, and the egregious decision in *Schuetz v. Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action*, the 2006 amend-

ment was allowed to stand.

Justice Anthony Kennedy was joined by Chief Justice Roberts and Justices Alito, Scalia, Thomas and Breyer in concurring in the judgment. Having worked on the case when she was Solicitor General, Justice Kagan recused herself. The two dissenting votes were cast by Justices Ginsberg and Sotomayor, the court's most reliable civil rights defenders. Justice Sotomayor's written dissent is an exceptionally scholarly, eloquent and impassioned argument in defense of affirmative action. She methodically eviscerates the majority's legal justification for its decision, citing several previous cases where the court overturned attempts to change rules midstream in ways that were detrimental to minority voters. She also reminds the court of its obligation to right historical wrongs and to expand educational opportunities for those who have traditionally been locked out.

Her dissent is based primarily on the court's untenable allowance of a change of rules that nullify the authority of elected University governing boards and now permit a

majority of voters to end affirmative action in higher education – a clear violation of the Equal Protection Clause. Justice Sotomayor writes, "... a majority may not reconfigure the existing political process in a manner that creates a two-tiered system of political change, subjecting laws designed to protect or benefit discrete and insular minorities to a more burdensome political process than all other laws."

Mindful of Michigan's shameful history of segregation in higher education and of a significant decline in minority enrollment and graduations since Prop 2 took effect, Sotomayor concludes, "The effect of [the Court's ruling] is that a white graduate of a public Michigan university who wishes to pass his historical privilege on to his children may freely lobby the board of that university in favor of an expanded legacy admissions policy, whereas a black Michigander who was denied the opportunity to attend that very university cannot lobby the board in favor of a policy that might give his children a chance that he never had and that they might never have absent that policy."

We may have lost this battle for affirmative action, but as long as there are voices as clear and strong as Sonia Sotomayor's on the Supreme Court, we are confident that in the end, equal opportunity, equal protection and equal justice will prevail.

Nonetheless, six other justices clearly demonstrated that our fight for civil rights is still not over – even in 21st century America. It is an unfortunate commentary on the direction of our nation when the highest court of our land determines that it is acceptable to consider factors that have seldom – if ever – been used as a basis for discrimination, such as legacy, athletics and geography in admissions, but not race. As Justice Sotomayor reminded her colleagues, "As members of the judiciary tasked with intervening to carry out the guarantee of equal protection, we ought not sit back and wish away, rather than confront, the racial inequality that exists in our society."

Marc H. Morial, former mayor of New Orleans, is president and CEO of the National Urban League.

# "Thugs in the Desert" at the Bundy Ranch



By Lee A. Daniels  
NNPA Columnist

mind: possessed of derangement, detached from reason, bereft of morality." Further, Blow's column is a must-read for its sharp-eyed analysis that the race-driven pathology of both Sterling and his mistress, V. Stiviano, provides "a disturbing peek at the intersection of racism, misogyny and privilege."

In one sense, that tips the scale between the two toward Sterling. He's so deeply mired in the psychosexual muck of the slave-master mentality – of being attracted to a woman of African-American and Mexican-American parentage while deluding himself that he's dominating Black men because he's so personally powerful and attractive.

However, the top prize in this particular pathetic contest belongs to the reportedly nearly 1,000 men and women who trekked to Bundy's ranch to be his "militia" in the stand-off he and they manufac-

tured against agents of the federal Bureau of Land Management who had come to end Bundy's cheating the federal government out of the \$1 million.

There were these self-described American patriots, with rifles, pistols, revolvers and AK-47s in hand, declaring themselves ready to "protect" a man who had repeatedly said he doesn't recognize the authority of the federal government. There were these so-called patriots prepared to shoot to kill officers of the United States of America. There were these men and women, so wrapped up in their delusional, mashed-up Hollywood western, "Rambo" and "Dirty Harry" fantasies, clutching their weaponry as if they'd be naked without them, itching for their personal apocalypse.

Tim Egan, an op-ed columnist for the New York Times, got it right when, before Bundy's racist rant, he

called this motley crew, "the thugs in the desert." He wrote, "This phony event brought out the worst of the gun-waving far right, and the national politicians who are barely one degree of separation from them. ... If you changed that picture to Black Panthers surrounding a lawful eviction in the inner city, do you think right-wing media would be there cheering the outlaws?"

Egan's point underscores, as with so many of the forces roiling American society today, how deeply racism motivates White conservatives' criticism of President Obama and opposition to federal policies. It's laced through and through the "angry White man" dynamic that pushes so much of the politics of the Tea Party and the Republican Party now—an "aggrieved entitlement" scholar Michael Kimmel calls it in his 2013 book, *Angry White Men: American Masculinity and the End*

of an Era.

The anger of these men and women at having lost their "place" in society has numerous causes and targets. But chief among them is the "threat" they feel from the advancement of people of color, especially Blacks. That's clearly the source of the –what else can one say? –anguish strikingly evident in Donald Sterling's taped comments at having to acknowledge that Black men exist on their own without his permission.

But Egan's accurate assessment of the Bundy mob also recalls another moment a half-century ago, when a similar band of "armed thugs" gathered to mount an insurrection against the federal government's enforcing the law. That was the firefight more than 2,000 violent White extremists staged the night

**Commentary,**  
Continued on page 9.



# Spiritually Speaking...



**James Washington**  
Guest Columnist

Since I began writing this column, I have to admit how gratified and humbled I am by the way it has been received. If you do not know by now, I am not an ordained minister and if memory serves, I was quite overwhelmed when I first considered doing this. I have publicly acknowledged that my ability to write is a blessing that I was not using as such. Awards and recognition had kind of become common-

place, but I had not accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. As that dynamic began to happen, I became increasingly aware of my taking for granted many a blessing that I have since understood to actually be an affront to God. Something was not right and I can describe it to you as being "out of balance." I'm pretty sure many of you have experienced being "out of balance" in your own lives at some point. For me, this didn't happen in a flash of light on my road to Damascus, but if I shared with you the journey towards my salvation, you might find them comparably enlightening. My point is that it was a very definite process, and with all the humility I could muster, I began to write this column as a personal point of reference. A blessing, any blessing, should be recognized as such and then used in some way to acknowl-

edge where it came from.

Since that time I have learned that ministry comes in many forms. Being blessed indeed requires being a blessing. Therefore I understand, more so now, the reaction to these words by many of you as public statements of the fragile and flawed faith of a struggling believer (me). Perfection is an unattainable goal but inextricably worthy of the attempt. Prior to writing this column, I can't say many people, even those closest to me, ever knew of any faith I might have had because I never allowed anyone even a peek at who I really am. That sounds remarkably silly to me now but, it was who I presented myself to be. Clearly to begin to even privately understand the necessity of public acknowledgement, let alone praise, was and continues to be some mighty powerful stuff for me. Any-

one who is willing to testify, discuss or share spiritual experiences relative to worldly events seem to me to have an open invitation to do so. I am still moved by the number of folk I thought I knew, who have shown me so much more depth and substance resulting from an open invitation, sign I must be sporting these days.

To merely say I found my way back to church, or let anybody know I was struggling with faith issues or prayer concerns led to discussions I would never have dreamed possible, because I was one locked up, closed up, unsaved individual. To say it all happened because I began to write this column would be an understatement. Too much happened to me prior to that. It would be too simplistic to attribute my metamorphosis to just penning a few words to paper. But,

to understand the nature of this blessing and having this platform to manifest, this gift has been a road very much worth taking. I am humbled by the opportunity and encourage you to also look past that which you might take for granted and see the blessing in it. You may or may not know that what you're struggling with everyday may in fact be your own personal route to significance in the eyes of God. He is awesome and to use your gifts in His name is also awesome. Some things I know. Some I don't. But I do know this. Whatever you're good at was given to you so you could be great at it. I guess that's my point. Every now and then I just need to say it so I don't forget it or again take it for granted.

**May God bless and  
keep you always.**

**Commentary, Continued  
from page 8.**

of Sept. 30, 1962 at Oxford, Miss. to try to kill James Meredith and the small force of federal marshals guarding him as he prepared to make good on his enrollment in the University of Mississippi.

The insurrection – the most violent action against the federal government since the Civil War—lasted all night. Two civilians were killed and 160 federal marshals were wounded. Meredith and the federal officers were saved only when President Kennedy ordered a small unit of the Mississippi National Guard and paratroopers from the U.S. Army 101st Airborne Division to occupy the campus.

What would have happened at the Bundy ranch if federal officials had not kept their cool and let the armed thugs goad them into a gun battle? The Oxford insurrection—and the entire history of the South's Jim Crow regime—illustrates what happens when so-called respectable conservatives let the "armed thugs" faction of White America into their tent. When is today's conservative movement going to accept that lesson?

Lee A. Daniels is a longtime journalist based in New York City. His latest book is *Last Chance: The Political Threat to Black America*.

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## Local Non-Profit Celebrates GIVE NOLA Day with Senior Center Dedication and Ribbon Cutting

**Seniors in Gentilly have a place to gather and give back**

St. Paul's Homecoming Center in Gentilly will be celebrated Give NOLA Day with the dedication and renaming ceremony for their new Senior Center located at 1509 Filmore Avenue in Gentilly.

The new St. Paul's Senior Center can accommodate up to 12 seniors a day and is currently open two days a week with plans to expand to three days. Seniors enjoy activities, a hot lunch, and serve the community through the "Seniors For Purposeful Living Program." Some programs include packing emergency kits for the Red Cross and organizing BINGO nights at local nursing homes. Refreshments and fellowship followed the short program and ribbon cutting which took place on Wednesday, May 6th.

Founded as a volunteer hub for Hurricane Katrina relief, St.



Left to right: Cathey Randolph, Director of St. Paul's Senior Center; Tom Oliver, St. Paul's Senior Center Board Member; Rev. Rob Courtney; Connie Uddo and newly-seated, District D Councilman, Jared Brossett.

Paul's Homecoming Center welcomed thousands of volunteers to the New Orleans area since 2006. This year, St. Paul's decided to put down the hammers and

focus on another large community need, a place for seniors. The St. Paul's Homecoming Center was renamed during a brief ceremony in memory of one of its



Seniors enjoy fellowship at the newly dedicated St. Paul's Senior Center following a ribbon cutting ceremony. The Center was dedicated in memory of longtime St. Paul's supporter, Mr. Phillip James, Jr. Left to right: Seniors and Cathey Randolph, Director of St. Paul's Senior Center.

longtime supporters, Mr. Phillip James, Jr.

"It's absolutely amazing what the Senior Center is doing for the community of Gentilly," said

Cathy Randolph, director of senior services. "The seniors are so excited to have a place to socialize. They love giving back to the community they call home!"

## Greater New Orleans, Inc. Named a Top 10 Economic Development Group in America

### Ranking Based on Jobs and Investment

This week, Greater New Orleans, Inc. (GNO, Inc.) announced that it has been named to Site Selection magazine's "Top 10 Economic Development Groups in America" list. The organization was joined by Baton Rouge Area Chamber (BRAC) and the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance (SWLA), from Lake Charles, for a total of three Louisiana organizations ranked among the best in the nation.

"The hard work of our business,

civic and elected community is beginning to pay off," said Michael Hecht, President and CEO of Greater New Orleans, Inc. "Greater New Orleans is now consistently named as one of the best places for business in America, and this Top 10 ranking for GNO, Inc. is a reflection of that regional success."

"We are delighted with the recognition of our efforts to showcase this region," said Patricia S. LeBlanc, Chairman of the Board, Greater New Orleans, Inc. "We are thrilled with the progress which is strong and growing."

In developing these rankings,

Site Selection weighed 2013 numbers in jobs, capital investment, jobs per capita, and investment per capita. Over the past year, \$3.6 billion in capital investment has been made and 577 new direct jobs have been created in the Greater New Orleans region.

Additional criteria included creativity of economic development strategy; depth and breadth of project activity; ability to generate breakthrough deals; and the ability to properly document the contributions of the economic development organization to actual project results.

## Entergy New Orleans Energy Star Partner of the Year

*Entergy earns award in Washington D.C.  
ceremonies for superior energy efficiency initiatives*

NEW ORLEANS—Entergy New Orleans, Inc. and the New Orleans City Council received a 2014 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year Award April 29 from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Washington D.C. ceremonies. Entergy exhibited outstanding contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by providing energy efficiency education and programs to its customers. Award winners are selected from the 16,000 organizations that participate in the ENERGY STAR program.

Entergy New Orleans and the New Orleans City Council, ENERGY STAR partners since 2011 through the Energy Smart Program, were honored for their work to increase market share of ENERGY STAR-qualified products and services through comprehensive outreach, education and marketing programs. The Energy Smart program was developed by the New Orleans City Council, is administered by Entergy New Orleans and is implemented by CLEAResult.

"This award shows that our partnership with ENERGY STAR



# Hip Hop Leaders Form Partnership with NNPA

By Jimmie Davis, Jr.  
Special to the NNPA from the  
Miami Times

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. – Upcoming hip-hop artists may find it challenging to get a DJ to play their songs or a mainstream media critic to review their music, but if they belong to Core DJs World Wide, they have nothing to worry about.

Last week, leaders of the group representing, representing more than 500 of the nation's most influential DJs, met with National Newspaper Publishers Association Chairman Cloves Campbell and a partnership was established that will give them access to approximately 200 Black newspapers. In turn, NNPA will have a strong connection with a new generation of readers.

"We want to merge the hip hop community with the Black media," Tony Neal, CEO and founder of Core DJs World Wide said in an exclusive interview with the Miami Times. "Now we have two well-defined voices reaching the people."

Core DJs World Wide instructs young executives on how to polish their talent and business skills. That was done during a 3-day that ended Monday at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel on South Beach amid celebrating the group's 10-year anniversary.

A third – and perhaps most important – factor was Jineea Butler, president of Hip Hop Union. She was responsible for forming the union between Hip Hop Union, Core DJs World Wide and the NNPA.

"There was no type of conversation taking place between the Black Press and the hip hop community," Butler said. "We have to support



NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell and the legendary DJ Scratch.

one another."

In addition to creating the unique alliance, Butler is a columnist for the NNPA News Service, reaching nearly 19 million readers.

Whether you're a DJ, singer, rapper or model – Core DJs is the team to belong to, because as the premier coalition of DJs, they have the inside track on the goings and comings of the industry.

Getting air play is the number one concern for rappers and R&B singers, and Neal has made this course of action relatively simple for his members. Throughout the conference, artists had opportunities to network and establish a rapport with DJ's and producers.

Once the DJ's listens to the music – the artist's stands a better chance of getting their music played in clubs and on the radio.

"I'm trying to push my entertainment career to the next level," said Rapper Pedro "Bizz" Juan Julio, who travelled from Topeka, Kansas to attend the conference. "I want to sign with a label, so I can feed my family." His debut CD is entitled "Count Me In".

These days it takes more than charisma to get noticed by a DJ. Musicians have to promote their strengths through establishing what's called a "brand."

"Your brand is your image," Bizz said. "It's who you are."

R&B singer and song writer Sincere Grant, based in Tulsa, Oklahoma performed his hot new single "Red Carpet Ready." He has a very delightful CD that's going to catch the eyes of a major record label. Don't be surprised, because has a very productive future in the entertainment field.

There was also a "Wrap" Session moderated by George E. Curry, editor of the NNPA News Service and BlackPressUSA.com.

"The "Wrap" session was all about the role that the NNPA is going to play at bridging the gap between the hip hop community and the Black Press. "We are here to let the collective know that the Black Press is a means of communication that they need to take advantage of," said Cloves C. Campbell, Jr., Chairman NNPA. "Our role as the Black Press is to give them positive exposure in the community they serve."

Entertainer, Owner and CEO of Pack Rat Productions Sheryl Underwood is also a member of Core DJs World Wide and she says the gathering made a tremendous impact on the lives of individuals striving to get their foot in the door.

"I just love what I'm seeing here because there's so much unity," Underwood said. "This is how you select the next president."

Neal, Butler and Campbell all agree that by utilizing the principles set forth during the civil rights era a movement has flourished where Core DJs Worldwide, the NNPA and Hip Hop Union is a powerful political unit.

"We have created a political interest group," said Brooklyn Recording artist and Producer Jazo. "Musicians as well as members of the community will benefit from this partnership."

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Entergy/ Continued from page 4.

has been beneficial for our local residents, and is a win all the way around," said former Councilwoman Cynthia Hedge-Morrell. "By helping residents make energy-efficient upgrades, they are able to save money and our beloved city becomes a greener place to live and work. Thanks to Entergy New Orleans for fully supporting the program – we were glad to work with them on this and other initiatives that im-

prove the lives of New Orleanians."

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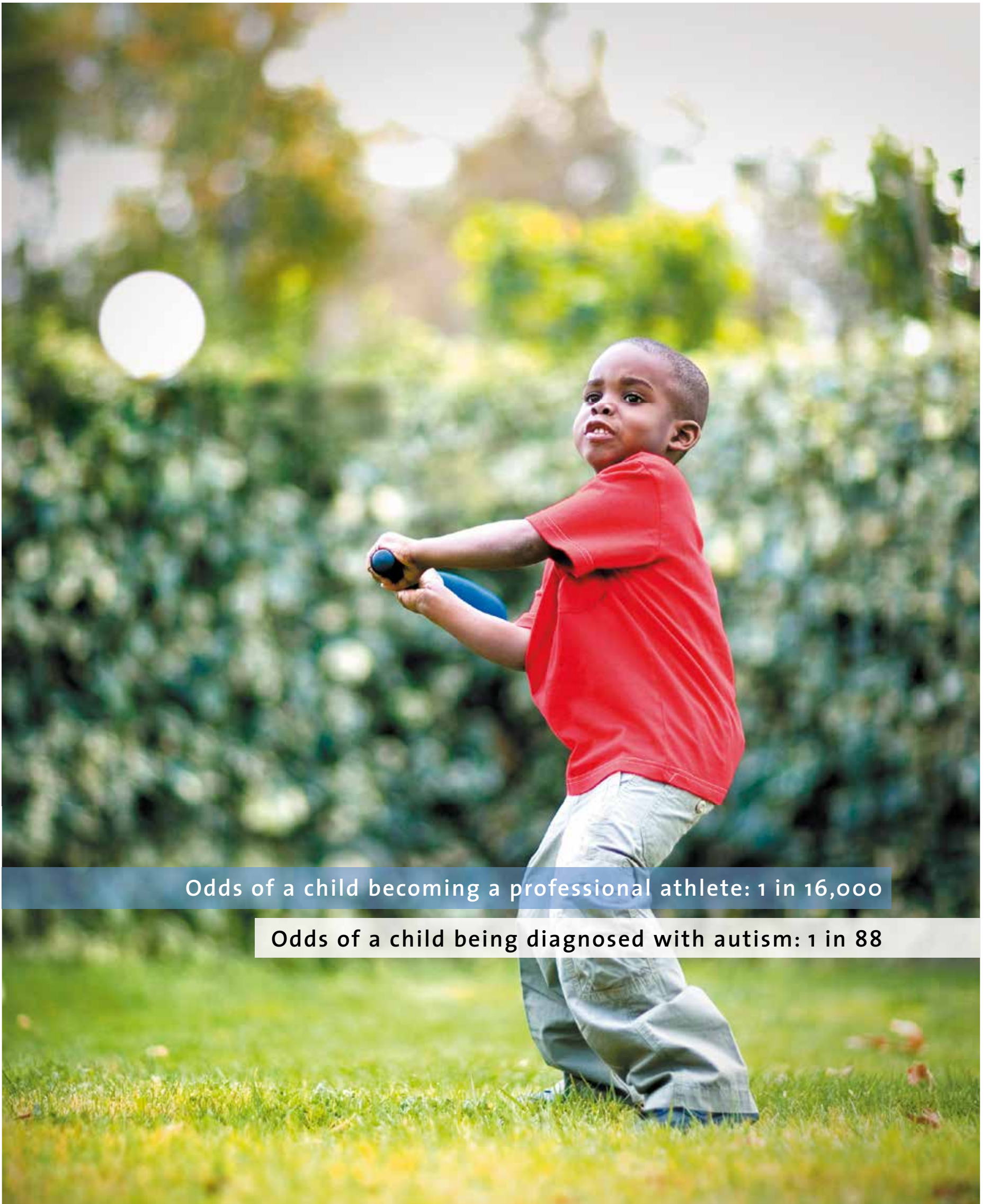
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